

AT A MEETING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ON NOVEMBER 13, 2013 IN THE MULTIPURPOSE ROOM, SECOND FLOOR, COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, CHRISTIANBURG, VIRGINIA:

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Rice, Chair, called the meeting to order.

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

Ms. Disney established the presence of a quorum.

Present: Bryan Rice, Chair
 Joel Donahue, Vice-Chair
 Cindy W. Disney, Secretary
 Coy Allen, Member
 Scott Kroll, Member
 Frank Lau, Member
 Erin Puckett, Senior Program Assistant
 Steven Sandy, Planning Director

Absent: Sonia Hirt, Member
 Bryan Katz, Member
 Chris Tuck, Board of Supervisors Liaison
 Brea Hopkins, Development Planner
 Dari Jenkins, Planning & Zoning Administrator

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

On a motion by Mr. Donahue, and seconded by Coy Allen, and unanimously carried the agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

On a motion by Joel Donahue, and seconded by Cindy Disney, and unanimously carried the consent agenda was approved.

PUBLIC ADDRESS:

Mr. Rice opened the public address. However, there being no comments the public address was closed.

OLD BUSINESS:

None presented.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Rice appointed Coy Allen, Frank Lau, and Scott Kroll to the nominating committee.

Mr. Sandy explained that the nominating committee could meet directly before the next Planning Commission meeting, or whenever is convenient, to determine nominees for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.

Mr. Kroll asked if any qualifications needed to be taken into consideration for these positions.

Mr. Sandy said that anyone on the Planning Commission would be eligible to fill those positions. He further noted that some Commissioners' terms were coming to an end over the next few months, but any one of those could be reappointed, other than Mr. Rice, who is currently in his second term.

Mr. Rice asked Mr. Sandy if the Board had said anything in regards to the open Planning Commission position.

Mr. Sandy said that they had not.

Ms. Disney reported that she had submitted her letter of reappointment.

Mr. Rice explained that all current members were eligible to be nominated.

Mr. Kroll asked what would happen if someone does not return after their end of term in June.

Mr. Sandy explained that whoever was appointed to a position would continue until their term was up and then could be reappointed.

Mr. Rice further clarified that a position can be filled again later if that member is not reappointed.

Mr. Kroll suggested that Mr. Lau chair the nominating committee since he has seniority.

Mr. Lau noted that those members on the nominating committee can also be appointed to any of the positions.

Mr. Sandy added that anyone can nominate additional candidates beyond those selected by the committee.

WORK SESSION:

On a motion by Mr. Donahue and seconded by Mr. Allen and unanimously approved, the Commission entered into work session.

Comprehensive Plan Transportation Chapter Update

Mr. Sandy explained that the process of updating the Transportation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan has been ongoing for some time. An intern had begun work on the chapter last year by pulling some of the additional information required now by State Code. Ms. Puckett has been reworking that chapter recently, as much of it needed to be redone. Mr. Sandy further explained that the goal is to get the draft completed and sent to VDOT before he leaves in January 2014. After VDOT reviews and comments on the chapter, a new version can go to public hearing. Originally, staff had hoped to complete the chapter before the end of the year; the new goal is to have it to VDOT by then.

Mr. Sandy then discussed the State Code requirements in regards to the transportation chapter.

Mr. Donahue commented that the State Code only requires plans to discuss roads, and does not mention any other modes.

Mr. Sandy said that this plan includes information regarding rail, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and other modes. The chapter should ultimately be relatively concise, and can link to other regional and state plans to avoid being too lengthy and redundant.

Mr. Sandy explained that Ms. Puckett has reorganized the chapter into seven (7) sections; the first two introductory and background sections have been carried over from the old plan with some updates. The next four (4) sections were added, and the final section will list the goals – this has not been updated yet from the previous version.

Mr. Donahue asked for confirmation that the transportation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is a new state requirement, and if so, did the county do it voluntarily in 2004.

Mr. Sandy explained that the specific state requirements are new, so the chapter just needed to be updated to meet State Code. However, staff took this as an opportunity to update the entire chapter.

Mr. Kroll asked how projects are determined for the local six year plan.

Mr. Sandy said that the selection and prioritization goes through a public hearing at the Board of Supervisors. Initially, VDOT suggests roads that need improvement, and will talk to the Planning Department during this process. The County Administrator will then schedule a hearing. Board members may also add projects to the list for discussion depending on their constituents' needs.

Mr. Kroll asked if the local plan is prioritized.

Mr. Sandy confirmed this. He explained that, for example, Yellow Sulphur Road has been on the local plan for years, but is a low priority, so it may be years before there is enough funding to do that project, and it may also not be completed with VDOT funds. Some of these lower priority projects may not see any activity for five years or more.

Mr. Kroll asked if the local plan projects were included in the draft chapter.

Mr. Sandy said that they are, but there is some overlap with the VDOT SYIP depending on the funding source. They are listed with the VDOT projects for this reason.

Mr. Donahue explained to the Commission that the county's plan is a subplan of VDOT's plan, and that the county has decision-making power in terms of road projects, but the state maintains the roads for the county.

Mr. Sandy stated that it is up to the county to prioritize projects. In many cases, funding may need to be rolled over for several years to have enough funding to complete a project, especially as funding has decreased in recent years. He further explained that the county does revenue sharing which requires the state to match funds. Under this revenue sharing program, the county can ask for up to \$10M and the state must match it; however, the county has been providing approximately \$0.5M annually, meaning there is approximately \$1M in total funding for projects each year with the state matching funds. Just recently, the county completed the Craigs Creek Road project, as well as a section of Yellow Sulphur Road that needed improvements.

Mr. Sandy indicated that the county projects from the MPO's Transportation Plan are also reflected in the new chapter, but this only includes roads within the MPO area, not the whole county. Mr. Sandy concluded that this draft represented an update, but is not yet complete, and will have additional maps and goal revisions in the next version. He stated that if the Planning Commission has additional items or feedback, they can discuss these now or email comments to staff. A new version will be provided at the December Planning Commission meeting, and a version with tracked changes can also be made available if Commissioners would like to see it. It will also be available when the chapter goes to public hearing.

Mr. Donahue asked if staff could provide a list of all deletions and insertions.

Mr. Sandy said that there would be too many to put in a concise list as so much of the plan was redone. However, staff can provide the tracked changes version. Staff will also make sure to indicate how the goals are changed.

Mr. Kroll commented that he would prefer to just move forward and not worry about going back to the old version.

Mr. Sandy stated that he hoped to submit the draft to VDOT by the end of the year, or at the latest, after the January Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Kroll asked about the crash data, and who addresses these safety concerns – the county or VDOT. He also asked if the locations of crashes were available.

Mr. Sandy answered that VDOT does have some safety funds available.

Mr. Donahue added that VDOT collects police reports to identify high numbers of crashes.

Mr. Sandy stated that there are also highway safety funds available, but these are hard to get. However, recently the county participated in a revenue sharing project on Old Sourwood Road that was locally administered by the MPO, to test dirt glue as an alternative to paving. Similar opportunities, which are

mutually beneficial to the county and VDOT, may be available in the future. He also agreed with Mr. Kroll that high crash locations may be good to include in the chapter; staff will look into adding that data.

2014 Work Program Discussion

Mr. Sandy explained that the work program is put together each year to identify what staff and the Planning Commission will be working on that year. He described major accomplishments from 2013. One of these was the mobile home addressing, which has been completed for Massie's and Mountain Creek mobile home parks, and is currently in progress for Adams Marke. Previously, addressing was often confusing and out of order, making it hard for emergency services to know where the homes were actually located. The addressing is being completed in phases so as not to overwhelm the post office. Michael Sutherland, the department's GIS Analyst, has been working with the mobile home parks, Verizon, emergency services, and the post office to make the transition.

Mr. Donahue asked if roads within the mobile home parks are private.

Mr. Sandy confirmed this.

Mr. Sandy described the goals for the 2014 work program. One of these is to look at the voting districts on the Virginia Tech campus. Currently the campus is divided between three (3) districts. Virginia Tech now wants a polling place on campus to make it easier for students to vote. Staff can use GIS to see how numbers change if there is a change in the location of polling districts. Staff will consult with the County Attorney, Virginia Tech, and others to look into this. Another goal is to get the field piece of LDO up and running for inspectors. Mr. Sandy also asked if the Commission would like to include another chapter of the Comprehensive Plan in the work program. While it is possible to update the whole plan at once, it is an extremely time-consuming task, so it may be wise to address one chapter at a time.

Mr. Donahue commented that this seemed like rolling updates rather than a block update every five (5) years.

Mr. Sandy confirmed this, adding that some localities do update their entire plan every five (5) years, while others may comply by updating it incrementally but more frequently. Mr. Sandy added that staff and the Commission could also update another Village Plan instead of, or in addition to, a chapter of the plan.

Mr. Donahue asked what Mr. Sandy's preference would be in terms of updating the plan.

Mr. Sandy said that he felt the Economic Development chapter or Prices Fork Village Plan would be good sections to look at next. Specifically, there is a need to look at areas for future parks and development sites. Furthermore, given the recent changes in the Prices Fork area, that Village Plan may need a review. Mr. Sandy concluded by saying that staff would provide a new version of the work plan at the next meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Donahue and seconded by Ms. Disney, and unanimously approved, the work session was closed.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- Board of Supervisors – No report.
- Agriculture & Forestal District – No report.
- Blacksburg Planning Commission – Mr. Allen reported that there weren't any projects under consideration that would impact the county, although the Town does have several large developments they are looking at currently.

Mr. Lau added that he was also at the most recent Blacksburg Planning Commission meeting, and believes that it may be a good idea for the Town and the county to collaborate to discuss the Prices Fork area as there is so much work going on there.

- Christiansburg Planning Commission – No report.
- Economic Development Committee – No report.
- Public Service Authority – Mr. Donahue commented that the biggest issue for the PSA right now is joining the New River Water Authority. They are working on a contract to tie the water line off of Merrimac Road to Warm Heath and tie the county system into the Town system. The county will also now be responsible for taking some of the sludge from the water treatment plant.
- Parks & Recreation – No report.
- Radford Planning Commission – Mr. Lau reported that he attended the most recent meeting, at which they reviewed various sections of the Comprehensive Plan with a new focus on areas where development is close to Blacksburg and the 177 corridor.
- School Board – No report.
- Tourism Council – No report.
- Planning Director's Report – Mr. Sandy stated that the Planning Commission will not meet next week. He added that there are currently two meetings scheduled for December but the second one may be cancelled if there are no applications. He also reminded the Commission of the upcoming Certified Planning Commissioner course to be held in Blacksburg in January.

Mr. Rice reminded the Commission that financial disclosure statements are due to County Administration.

MEETING ADJOURNED:

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 PM.